

**DRAFT MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday 15 March 2022**

- PRESENT:** Kelly Mackenzie, Chris O'Neil, Ruth McFadyen, Tina Stones, Arvinder Kainth, James Millar, Stephen Sheridan
- CHAIR:** Tina Stones
- APOLOGIES:** Russell Edwards, Robyn Kennedy, Bonnie Crawford, and Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Quality
- ATTENDING:** Assistant Principal – Academic and Research  
Information Systems Manager  
Access and Progression Manager  
Quality Manager  
Professional Development Manager  
Board Secretary
- OBSERVER:** Dee Bird

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the new members.

No Declarations of Interest were noted.

**Confidential Closed Session – Committee Creative Space**

A confidential closed session took place which provided the Committee with the creative space to discuss the vision for research and curriculum review (Note of Session: CSN-LTR-032022).

**1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

**a.) Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 September 2021**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 28 September 2021 were **AGREED** and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

**b.) Minutes of the Meeting held on 07 December 2021**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 07 December 2021 were **AGREED** and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

**2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

- Research and Innovation – The Committee noted that a presentation from those within our research teams will form the creative space for the June 2022 meeting.
- Early Student Experience Survey Results – The Committee noted that this item will remain on the list and that the Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality will provide an update at the June meeting.
- HISA Report and Student Partnership Agreement Update – The Committee noted that this item will remain on the list and that the HISA Inverness President will provide an update at the June meeting.

**3. QUARTER 2 – COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The Quality Manager spoke to this report which provided the Committee with an analysis of the complaints received to date. The Committee noted that whilst quarter 1 complaints had seen an increase it now appeared that this had stabilised and the Committee was advised that there had been a reduction in the number of complaints received within quarter 2.

The Quality Manager provided the Committee with information on the categories of complaints, outcomes, timescales, follow up surveys and learning. The Committee thanked the Quality Manager for this report.

*The Quality Manager left the meeting.*

#### **4. STUDENT RETENTION**

*The Information Systems Manager joined the meeting.*

The Information Systems Manager spoke to the joint report and provided the Committee with an update on withdrawals for the Academic Year 2021/22. The Committee was advised that we had experienced an increase in withdrawals last Academic Year and that it appears from the data that we are facing a similar picture for this Academic Year. The Committee discussed the current withdrawal rates and noted the dates for early and further withdrawals.

Lengthy discussions which focussed on the following took place:

- The variations between departments with the Committee noting that most withdrawals are due to personal reasons. The Committee acknowledged the difficulty and complexities involved in trying to identify trends and noted the continuing impact of Covid-19 on student's mental health. The Committee noted that withdrawals remain a sector wide issue.
- The impact on changes to the SQA grading system because of Covid-19 and how this is affecting not only withdrawal rates but also recruitment rates.
- New concerns which students are facing not only from Covid-19 but with the current inflation rises and fuel poverty. The Committee noted that we have set up a Cubby initiative where toiletries are available for students to take if needed along with a Share the Warmth initiative where free coats can be given to students in need.
- The Committee highlighted the importance of students being offered flexible learning as well as earn and learn opportunities.
- The support which PATs provide to students with the Committee noting that PATs are providing students with substantially greater support than in the past and that the support being requested from them now includes pastoral care. The Committee noted that a review of the support which PATs provide will be discussed with the EMT.

- The expected impact if our Scottish Government funding for mental health support is ceased.
- Staff retention, Staff PRD, Distributed Leadership model and staff learning requirements.

The Committee welcomed both the proactive approach being taken by staff, the analytical data which the KPI's are providing and the additional mental health and wellbeing resources which have been made available to students.

*The Information Systems Manager left the meeting.*

## **5. UPDATE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING ENHANCEMENT (INCLUDING DIGITAL PEDAGOGY AND INCLUSIVE AND TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE)**

*The HISA Inverness President joined the meeting.*

The Professional Development Manager spoke to her report providing the Committee with an update on:

- The Launch of the new Learning and Teaching Induction Programme – highlighting that face-to-face induction sessions have now recommenced.
- The delivery of the PDA Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges and the new UHI TQFE.

*Stephen Sheridan left the meeting.*

- Registration of lecturers with General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS)
- The relaunch of the Learning and Teaching Review Programme
- The Digital Skills Training Survey
- The new UHI Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy
- Future enhancements

The Professional Development Manager took the Committee through the Professional Development Pathway for Lecturers document.

The Committee discussed the qualifications which GTCS require for Lecturers to register with them and noted that as part of UHI we are in talks with GTCS to hopefully broaden the criteria. The Committee noted that several staff members do not meet the current criteria with regards levels of qualifications, despite extensive industry expertise and that we are continuing to support them to secure the necessary qualifications in order to register.

The Committee thanked the Professional Development Manager for this update.

## **6. UPDATE ON CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2020-23**

The Access and Progression Manager spoke to this joint report and provided the Committee with both a background to the Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-23 and an update to the actions on the Plan. The Committee noted retention data and analysis for care experienced student withdrawals for the Academic Year 2020/21 and noted the plans to improve retention and support for care experienced students within this Academic Year.

The Committee welcomed the proactive and trauma informed approach which is being taken, the prioritisation of care experienced students digital needs and the wrap around support which is being offered.

*The Professional Development Manager left the meeting.*

The Committee discussed:

- the impact of Covid-19.
- the Highlands and Islands Regional Outcome Agreement Equality Target, withdrawal rates and sector benchmarking.
- the importance of Corporate Parenting Training.

**Action:** The Board Secretary will organise appropriate Corporate Parenting Training for all Board Members.

**Decision:** It was **AGREED** that Corporate Parenting would be a standing item on all future Committee agendas.

The Committee gave their thanks to the Access and Progression Manager for their report.

## **7. HISA REPORT AND STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT UPDATE**

The Committee noted the contents of the report and the HISA President provided the Committee with a brief update on the recent student elections.

## **8. EDUCATION SCOTLAND PROGRESS VISIT REVIEW (15-17 MARCH 2022)**

The Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality advised the Committee that the Education Scotland Progress Visit was underway with open meetings being held. It was reported that the open meetings were being well received with lots of engagement from staff. The Committee welcomed the positive feedback and noted that a full report on the review would be taken to the June 2022 meeting.

## **9. MINUTES FROM INVERNESS COLLEGE COMMITTEES**

The Committee noted the contents of the following meetings:

- Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 16 November 2021.
- Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 14 December 2021.
- Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 18 January 2022.
- Student Journey and Enhancement Committee held on 15 February 2022.
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee held on 30 November 2022.

## **10. AOCB**

The Committee discussed the opportunities available for them to visit the Campus and the School of Forestry.

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 14 JUNE 2022 AT 4.30 P.M.**

**Signed by the Chair:** *Tina Stones*

**Date:** 14 June 2022